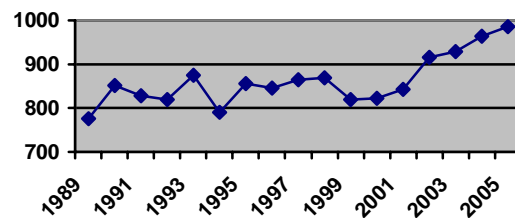


- Kentucky's Highway Incident Management Program -

Improving Safety and Reducing Delay in the Commonwealth

Did you know that there were more highway crash fatalities in Kentucky in 2005 than in any year in recent history? One reason may be that the amount of travel continues to grow on our roadways. There are more people traveling (and making more trips) by automobile than ever before. Drivers are also bombarded with plenty of distractions while behind the wheel.

Fatalities on Kentucky's Public Roadways



Highway crashes cause problems for everyone, not just for those directly involved in the crash. Emergency responders are at risk of being struck by a passing vehicle while performing their duties. Other motorists are at risk of being involved in a secondary crash due to congestion and unexpected stops. One thing is certain: **the longer the crash is affecting the roadway, the longer responders and motorists are exposed to danger.**

$$\text{Highway Crashes} = \text{Safety Problems} + \text{Traveler Delay}$$

Traveler delay is another significant problem caused by highway crashes. Unexpected delays create frustrated (and potentially angry) drivers. Even the effects of minor roadway closures are significant, since it is estimated that just 5 minutes of stopped traffic can lead to 15 minutes of delay. Traveler delay is also costly in terms of reduced productivity, increased costs of goods and services, and increased fuel consumption. Traveler delay in the US is estimated to cost the public billions of dollars annually.



With the highway crash fatalities on the increase, the newly established Department of Transportation Safety within the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet will be seeking ways to reduce the number of crashes through safety enhancements and public education. Since these improvements will not completely eliminate crashes in the foreseeable future, the focus must also be on reducing the impact of highway crashes. That is why Kentucky has implemented a Highway Incident Management Program, which focuses on **effective management of highway crashes**. The goals of the Program are to:

- 1) Improve the Safety of Responders and Motorists
- 2) Reduce Traffic Delay
- 3) Improve Motorist Awareness
- 4) Improve Responder Preparedness

A statewide Incident Management Task Force has been assembled to direct the Program. The Task Force is a multi-agency group formed under the Governor's Executive Committee on Highway Safety. The guiding document for the Task Force is Kentucky's Highway Incident Management Strategic Plan. The Plan was developed in May of 2005 by the Kentucky Transportation Center at the University of Kentucky. It provides a vision and strategy for significantly improving all aspects of incident management. Primary input for the plan came from Kentucky stakeholders, as well as from other state and national highway incident management plans.

A copy of the Plan may be obtained at:

www.ktc.uky.edu

**Go to Research, Reports by Section,
and look under Intelligent
Transportation Systems.**

Task Force Members Include:

- Dept. of KY Vehicle Enforcement
- Federal Highway Administration
- Kentucky State Police
- Kentucky Transportation Cabinet
- KY Ambulance Providers' Assoc.
- KY Assoc. of Chiefs of Police
- KY Assoc. of EMTs
- KY Assoc. of Fire Chiefs
- KY Assoc. of Public-Safety Communication Officials
- KY Dept. of Environmental Protection
- KY Dept. of Transportation Safety
- KY Division of Emergency Management
- KY Emergency Number Association
- KY Firefighters' Association
- KY Sheriff's Assoc.
- Local Incident Management Teams (Lexington, Louisville, Northern Kentucky)
- State Fire Commission
- State Fire Marshal's Office
- Towing and Recovery Assoc. of KY

The Plan establishes specific action strategies for improving incident management in Kentucky. Some of these that have already been implemented, or are in the process of being implemented, include:

- Passage of Quick Clearance Legislation
- Implementation of Rural Roadway Service Patrols
- Incident Management Training of Responders (Highway Crash Site Management)
- Development of Training for Responders (Emergency Traffic Control)
- Establishment of a Statewide Incident Management Task Force

There are many other strategies that are being considered for future efforts. However, many of the strategies outlined in the Plan will require the support and involvement of local responders, highway workers, and government officials. If you are interested in partnering with the Task Force to improve safety and reduce delay in your community, please contact Jennifer Walton (859-257-7239 or jwalton@engr.uky.edu) at the University of Kentucky for more information.

